

HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION A Handbook for Teachers, Researchers, Health Professionals and Decision Makers	
Title	Health Promotion in Croatia and Experiences with the First National Health Promotion Project
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Key words	Andrija Stampar, Andrija Stampar School of Public Health, National Health Promotion project, Croatia
Learning objectives	After completing this module students and public health professionals should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be critically aware of the past positive experiences and lessons learnt in development of national health promotion and disease prevention programs; • Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the “imported” projects in local circumstances; • Be able to conceptualize what is needed in planning, implementation and evaluation of an effective program, using example of the First Croatian Health Promotion (vertical) program
Abstract	The paper describes a very specific historical development of health promotion and health education in Croatia, based on Andrija Stampar ten principles written at the beginning of the last century. Since 1927, Andrija Stampar School of Public Health has been the initiator, facilitator, leader and evaluator of different health promotion and community-based programs in Croatia and abroad. The activities and approaches passed different periods: the early bird of modern public health and enlightenment approach to health education and community health, period from sixties to eighties emphasizing community interventions, self-help movement and Family Practice, war and postwar time as well as current situation. The paper is critically discussing similar situation in South-Eastern countries: some very positive experiences from the past, the new possibilities in development of health promotion and disease prevention activities, but, on the other hand, the strong influence of supporters from abroad. Therefore, the experiences of the First National Health Promotion project, supported by World Bank, is described in details.

Teaching methods	Individual reading. Intensive small group discussion: Similarities and differences between Croatian experiences and regional/national settings.
Specific recommendations for teachers	If possible, use similar national examples (Case study). Prepare national readings for participants.
Assessment of students	Structured essay: What I learnt from our national program(s) supported from broad?

HEALTH PROMOTION IN CROATIA AND EXPERIENCES WITH THE FIRST NATIONAL HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT

Gordana Pavlekovic

Andrija Stampar: Back to the Future

The real father of public health and health promotion in Croatia is Andrija Stampar, “a charismatic leader of social medicine and international health” (1). At the beginning of the 20th century it was evident that the public health situation in Croatia, as well as in neighborhood countries, was poor (2). Stampar was aware of the situation and became interested in solving it. He became very active in public health efforts in the Health Section of the League of Nations and later on, he became one of the founders of the World Health Organization and the author of the well-known WHO definition of health (3,4).

Andrija Stampar, a young physician born in small village in Croatia, wrote ten principles of health care. There is no doubt that professor Stampar, the founding father of the School of Public Health in Croatia, initiator of establishment of many other important institutions all over the World, was the visionary of health in the World. Ten principles defined the Croatian approach to health but also influenced social and community-based approach development.

Written in the year 1926, these principles are actual today more than ever.

1. It is more important to enlighten the people than to impose laws.
2. It is most important to prepare the ground in a certain sphere and to develop the right understanding for questions of hygiene.
3. The questions of public health and its improvement must not be monopolized by medical authorities, but has to be cared out by everybody, for only by joint work can the progress of health can be obtained.
4. First of all the physician must be a social worker; by individual therapy he cannot attain much, social therapy is the means of success.
5. Economically the physician must not be dependent on his patient, because it hinders him in the accomplishment of his principle tasks.
6. In matters of people’s health no difference is to be made between the rich and the poor.
7. It is necessary to form a health organization, in which the physician will seek the patient, not the patient to seek the physician; for this is only way to gather an ever increasing number of those health we have to care for.
8. The physician has to be the teacher of the people.
9. The question of national health is of greater economic than humanitarian importance.
10. The principle fields of action of a physician are human settlements and not laboratories and consulting room (5)

Health promotion and health education in Croatia: Historical perspectives

The history of development of Health Promotion in Croatia is based on the Andrija Stampar School of Public Health («School of People’s Health») activities since 1927 when the School was established. This institution has been always the initiator, facilitator, leader and evaluator of different health education, health promotion and community-based programmers in Croatia. During the history, the activities and approaches passed different periods, especially in the field of health education and health promotion.

Period from 1927 to the middle of the last century was the early bird of modern public health and enlightenment approach to health education and community health in Croatia (6).

The School of Public Health, together with the National Institute for Public Health, was established in 1927, with the task to study conditions which might have favorable or unfavorable impacts on people's health. From its foundation till the beginning of World War II, the activities of the School focused on the development, organization and implementation of programmes with the aim to solve environmental problems (safe drinking water, disposal of infected materials and improvising of living conditions) (7). The main strategy used was education of lay-people. For this reason, three departments were established within the School of Public Health:

- Department for Health Education
- Department for Health Propaganda
- Peasant's University

Department for Health Education and Department for Health Propaganda were responsible for production of books and leaflets, journals and posters and exhibitions. The first Film industry was established in this part of the Europe, mainly producing films with health educational messages. Some of them are very actual today (for example: Alcohol and Health, Healthy Eating etc.). Grand Prix was awarded to the School for «Living in the Country» at the World Exhibition held in Paris in 1937. In 1933, a film by Hloupek and Gerasimov «One day in the Turopolje Cooperative» was made, which was awarded at the Florence Film Festival for the best ethnographic film, and with special award at the Venice Film Festival, 25 years later (8).

Peasant's University (for Males and for Females) was established at the School of Public Health in 1928 to educate those who would act as a bridge between the health system and the peasants, e.g. 5-months courses for men and 3-months courses for women were organized to educate them in hygiene, nutrition, child care, housing, economy, etc.

Period from sixties to eighties emphasized community interventions, self-help movement and Family Practice. In 1963, the School started organizing as the first in the world 3-years vocational training courses for general practitioners. Preventive measures have been a regular part of their training and everyday work in families.

War and postwar problems gave the new role of public health institutions and building civil society in modern Croatia

Throughout the war, the School was active in the places with highest life risks, cities under siege, prisoners of war camps, and hospitals in war areas. On the basis of these experiences, the «Challenge of Goodness» was formulated as humanitarian health proposals to improve civil protection in prevention, controlling and stopping war (9). At the same time, the Educational Multimedia Center (EMC) was very active in production of different health educational materials for refugees and displaced persons as well as in development of training programmes and materials for health professionals facing with war-related problems.

During the war, the existing «old» public health institutions at the counties levels became key-points for different preventive activities related to injuries in children, and emphasizing the treat of explosive devices and weapons.

At the same time, political changes and democratization offered the new possibilities in development of civil society (including NGO's sector) and growing-up the different health promotion programmes based on «settings» approach.

At present, majority of Health Promotion activities in Croatia are running by Andrija Stampar School of Public Health, some of them in collaboration with governmental institutions (for example, National Institute of Public Health) and with many different non-governmental groups (civil society).

From the 1990's, «setting-approach» started to be a very popular in Croatia. Experiences from the Health Promoting Schools, Healthy Cities, Healthy Counties, Baby-friendly Hospitals as the example of Health Promoting Hospitals, are Croatian successful stories in Health Promotion.

There are also different vertical national programmers. One of the most popular is «Say YES to non-smoking», initiated by Andrija Stampar School of Public Health.

Additionally, Educational Multimedia Center (EMC), located at Andréa Stampar School of Public Health, is the organizer of the EMC festival – competition festival of health messages using different media channels (TV, print, journals, posters, etc.). This festival started to be very supportive in development of ethically and professionally correct and visually appropriate messages to ordinary people.

The First National Health Promotion Project

The World Bank approved a financial loan for health related matters to the Republic of Croatia. The whole population aims a part of the loan at health promotion and education, as well as the accepting of the healthier life-style.

On the basis of morbidity and mortality data analysis, cardiovascular diseases and sexually transmitted diseases including the HIV infection have been identified as public health priorities.

Health Promotion was a sub-project of the Health Project in Croatia, running by the World Bank, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia and Croatian Institute of Health Insurance. Croatian Institute of Public Health was appointed as a responsible institution for the sub-project Health Promotion (9).

Goal and objectives

The main goal of the sub-project Health Promotion was promoting and accepting healthier life-styles on the population level with the consecutive reduction of prevalence regarding some risk factors relevant for developing cardiovascular diseases and spreading of sexually transmitted diseases, resulting with the morbidity, mortality and invalidity rate decrease.

The specific goals were:

- To reduce the smoking prevalence in the population, and especially the number of smokers among persons bellow 20 years of age by 20%;
- To achieve changes in eating habits by reduction of intake of salt and refined carbohydrates;
- To correct daily energy intake, including consumption of macro-nutrients, with special attention to reduce intake of fats, particularly animal fats;
- To promote the regular physical activity, especially walking for exercise in sedentary 14 Km weekly;
- To increase the general population knowledge concerning sexually transmitted diseases prevention as well as encourage responsible sexual behavior (9).

To achieve the goals the Health promotion sub-project included four important life-style factors: diet, smoking, physical activity and sexual behavior.

The implementation plan had four phases:

1. Establishment of baseline parameters to define the magnitude and context of the problems, to facilitate planning of interventions and to serve as an objective basis for monitoring and evaluation;
2. Design of Health Promotion interventions, based on the quantitative and qualitative baseline parameters;
3. Application of the Health Promotion interventions to the target population/population sub-groups;
4. Evaluation, to determine progress made towards achievement of objectives, to determine the effectiveness of interventions and to serve as a basis for improvement on the Health Promotion strategies.

Design of Health Promotion Activities was based on the baseline parameters. They showed that interventions in Croatia must be targeted to:

In relation to smoking:

- To the children and adolescents, both girls and boys, to protect them all from tobacco promotion and to receive all educational and other help to resist the temptation to start smoking;
- To the general population to accept that (a) everyone has the right to be informed of the health risks of tobacco use, (b) fresh air from tobacco smoke is essential component of right to a healthy environment, (c) all citizens have the right to smoke-free air in the work-place and enclosed public places and transport, and (d) every child has the right to smoke free environment.
- To the smokers – to receive encouragement and help to overcome the habit.

In relation to dietary habits:

- To the children and adolescents, in continental as well as coastal region, to accept proper dietary habits related to the intake of salt and refined carbohydrates, fats, particularly animal fats;
- To the adults, both in continental as well as coastal region, to achieve change in dietary habits by reduction of intake of salt and refined carbohydrates, fats, particularly animal fats;

In relation to regular physical activity:

- To the children and adolescents that the regular physical activity promotes their physical fitness as a composite of intellectual, emotional and social as well as physical well-being;
- To the adults, especially sedentary, to control their health status and start with regular everyday physical activity to promote their health, especially in scope of increasing their muscle tone and flexibility as well as efficiency of their heart.

In relation to STD's and HIV infection:

- For school children to develop human relationship, especially towards the infected and diseased, and encourage the interpersonal responsible sexual behavior
- For adolescents to receive all educational and all other help to encourage the responsible sexual behavior and learn about STD's as well as HIV infection prevention, increase tolerance and acceptability of HIV infected and AIDS patient

- For the general population to receive all information on STD's and HIV infection prevention, to encourage responsible sexual behavior and to increase the tolerance and acceptability of HIV infection and AIDS patient.

The health promotion programme implementation had two crucial parts: Training/education programme and Public campaign.

Training and education was carried out on three levels: (1) training and education of key-persons; (2) training and education of educators and (3) training and education of local health promoters

Training and education of key-persons

Key-persons were members of the Health Promotion Working Group: representatives from Public Health Institutes from major centers (Zagreb, Rijeka, Osijek, and Split), Medical School University of Zagreb, from Ministry of Education and Sports, religious organizations, and persons who could contribute to the success of the project. Total number was 25. Training programme of key-persons was carried out at international level, using a workshop form for three days. Goal of the training programme was to make key-persons familiar with the project objectives, content of work, plan and organization, monitoring and evaluation of the activities.

Specific objectives were:

- To acquire basic knowledge about problem (project content);
- To understand the principles of health promotion and health prevention;
- To remain the risk factors of cardiovascular diseases and STD;
- To develop positive attitudes towards the project (motivation);
- To develop skills in communication, planning, organization of work, monitoring and evaluation.

Training/education of educators

Educators were selected from public health institutions, primary health care units (school health, general practice, occupational health, nurses) and elementary schools (teachers, pedagogues, psychologists), all together 80 educators. Four workshops/seminars were organized in four regional centers (city of Zagreb, Split, Rijeka and Osijek).

In principle, the aims of the training programme for educators were the same as for the key-persons. Both were expected to acquire the same range of skills and positive attitudes to health promotion. However, the educators had to master the communication and planning skills as well as to transfer knowledge and be in full control of health education techniques.

Training/education of local health promoters

The plan was to have local health educators/health promoters at community level. Their tasks were based on organization of health educational programmes in schools, families, various social and risk groups in community, etc. Educators responsible for the programme at county level organized their education. The content of the training was similar to the training programme for educators with special emphasis on health educational skills development. In total, 150 professionals have been covered by educating the educator's seminars and 120 professionals have been covered by four direct/local health promoters' seminars.

Project Working Group prepared Manual and the Educational kit (9). They were prepared with (1) project information and proposals how to run the project, (2) facts about smoking, nutrition, physical activities and STD in Croatia and (3) at least two active workshops for children and adults with all materials and detailed instructions how to implement its in practice.

Public Campaign

The first step in Public campaign was to choose the adequate firm for the production of materials. Marketing company was responsible for Project delivery and materials for campaign addressed to the general public through media messages (TV, radio, newspaper) as well as those using other media channels (T-shirts, posters, video spots, etc).

Logo (heart) and slogan of the public campaign were chosen: «O zdravlju odlučujete sami» (Health is in your hand, or You are deciding about your health).

Specific messages were:

- For CVD: Think on your heart («Mislite na svoje srce»).
- For tobacco: I love non-smoker («Volim nepusaca»), and Rights for the fresh air («Pravo na cisti zrak»).
- For nutrition: Daily food guide pyramided («Piramida zdrave hrane»), and Control your weigh («Kontrolirajte tjelesnu tezinu»).
- For physical activity: Moving towards health («Kretanjem do zdravlja»).

Products of the Public campaign were (1) 10 different broadcasting spots (30 sec), (2) 20 TV broadcasting spots (10 sec), (3) 15 radio messages (30 sec), (4) 3.000 posters (50x70 cm), (5) 100 posters (70x100 cm), (6) 50 jumbo posters (520x250 cm), (7) 4x10.000 brochures and (8) 8x90.000 leaflets (A4). For the whole preparation of the material and media campaign, the World Bank approved 775.700 USD in the 1995.

What we did learn from the First National Health Promotion project?

- Very high costs, very low results
- Plan delivery is the essential part of the project
- Politicians and policy-makers must be included
- Multiprofessional and intersectoral approach is important
- Salutogenic approach is needed
- Innovative approach is needed (health as a part of everyday life)
- Action, not education!

Current situation in health promotion in Croatia: SWOT

During the history, Andrija Stampar School of Public Health played the most important role in community-based programmes, health education and that what we call today – Health Promotion (based on Ottawa Charter) (10). Being the WHO Collaboration centre for PHC for many years, the member of different networks in worldwide research and international training in Health Promotion, there is no doubt – the School is recognized in the country and abroad as the leading institution in this field. Unfortunately, being out of the regular health system and belongs to Ministry of Science, the present situation put the School in position with less influence to current situation.

National Institute of Public Health is responsible for data collection and announcement of Preventive measures. This Institute is running several surveys in healthy lifestyle (ESPAD, WHO Household Health Survey) but they are not a regular part of the Croatian health system. Additionally, there are many health surveys (including CINDI in demonstration areas, different research on school children health habits, etc.) running by Andrija Stampar School of Public Health, but, unfortunately, there is no strong connection between these activities.

Regarding training in health promotion and public health (undergraduate, postgraduate, vocational and in-service training), Andrija Stampar School of Public Health is a leading institution in Croatia. All medical students (future medical professionals) have the topics in health promotion principles and activities, as well as undergraduate students of social work, nurses, etc. Modules on Health promotion are present in postgraduate training in Public health, Occupational health, School health, Family health, Social Pediatrics, etc. There is no special postgraduate study in Health Promotion.

The most important issue in the current situation in Croatia is development of the National Health Promotion Law (under discussion). There are still a lot of discussion (as well research) trying to answer on the question: Do we really need a special professions («health promoters») or not? The problem of terminology is still present, with no clear understanding what does it mean «public health», «new public health» and «health promotion».

There are many activities in the field of Health Promotion - unfortunately not well coordinated, even not recognized as a part of the Croatian health system. Additionally, there are many resistances to have interdisciplinary approach in this field (monopoly of medical professionals working in Public Health Institutes, mainly epidemiologists and social medicine experts).

In summary, the SWOT analyze of current situation in Croatia concerning Health Promotion could be described as follows:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Tradition Positive experiences Legal framework Decentralization Multiprofessional approach	Rational approach to health «Sectoral» isolationism Inadequate qualifications of professionals Low motivation Voluntarism Lack of clear visions Lack of financial support Lack of coordination and leadership
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Decentralization Health care reform Intersect oral collaboration Motivation	Centralization Resistant to change Hidden interests New (vertical) structure (health promoters?)

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